

The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is a survey of women who recently gave birth that asks about their experiences and behaviors before, during and shortly after their pregnancy. Vermont has participated in PRAMS since 2001. This report presents highlights for 2013 Vermont births, organized by topic area. Further information is available upon request.

### Preconception Health & Family Planning

- In the year prior to pregnancy, 32% of mothers were dieting to lose weight, and over half (57%) exercised 3 or more times per week.
- During a visit to a health care provider during the 12 months before getting pregnant:
  - 16% were checked for diabetes.
  - 24% were checked for high blood pressure.
  - 26% were checked for depression or anxiety.
- 51% were not taking a multivitamin during the month prior to pregnancy, while 35% took one every day. The remaining 14% took multivitamins, but not every day of the week.
  - Among women whose pregnancies were unplanned, 74% were not taking a vitamin.
- 42% of births resulted from unintended pregnancies.
- 51% of mothers who were not trying to become pregnant used a method of birth control.

### Prenatal Care & Childbirth Preparation

- 83% of women talked to a healthcare worker about how much weight to gain during pregnancy.
  - 82% talked about healthy foods to eat while pregnant and 85% discussed exercise during pregnancy.
  - 31% discussed programs or resources for healthy weight gain during pregnancy.
- 87% discussed breastfeeding with a health care worker at a prenatal visit.
- 80% discussed what to do if she experienced prenatal or postpartum depression.
- 59% talked about getting tested for HIV.
- 52% discussed seatbelt use during pregnancy.
- 50% discussed physical abuse by partners.
- 57% of first-time mothers took a childbirth education class during pregnancy.
  - Only 39% of first-time mothers enrolled in Medicaid took childbirth classes.

### Work and Workplace Leave

- 78% of all women worked during their pregnancies.
  - 78% of these had returned to their jobs by the time of the survey or planned to in the near future.
- 63% of Medicaid enrollees worked during pregnancy.
  - 29% of all women who worked during pregnancy used Medicaid to pay for prenatal care.
  - 63% of working women on Medicaid did not have paid leave at their jobs.
- Over half (58%) of all women felt they were able to take too little time off after delivery.

## Oral Health

- 62% of women had their teeth cleaned in the year prior to their most recent pregnancy.
- 59% had a teeth cleaning during pregnancy.
- During pregnancy, 57% had a talk with a dentist or health care worker about how to care for her teeth and gums.
- 18% went to the dentist during pregnancy about a problem with their teeth and gums.
- 25% could not afford to go to the dentist during pregnancy. There was no statistical difference between women enrolled in Medicaid and women with private insurance in terms of being able to afford a dental visit.
- 24% of women enrolled in Medicaid couldn't find a dentist who accepted Medicaid.
- 12% didn't think it was safe to go to the dentist during pregnancy.
- 8% couldn't find a dentist who took pregnant patients.

## Breastfeeding

- 90% of mothers initiated breastfeeding.
  - 79% breastfed at least 4 weeks, and 72% for at least 8 weeks.
- Each of the following breastfeeding-supportive hospital practices happened for at least 90% of breastfeeding mothers: staff provided breastfeeding information; baby and mother stayed in the same room, mother breastfed baby in the hospital; staff told mother to nurse on demand.
- Each of the following breastfeeding-supportive hospital practices happened for between 75% and 90% of breastfeeding mothers: hospital staff helped mother learn to breastfeed; breastfeeding took place within the first hour after delivery; baby was fed only breast milk; the hospital provided a phone number for breastfeeding support; mother was not provided a gift pack with formula.
- 64% of babies who were breastfed at least once were not given a pacifier by hospital staff.
- 82% of women who delivered low birthweight babies were provided with a breast pump in the hospital.

## Alcohol & Marijuana Use

- 68% drank at least some alcohol in the 3 months prior to pregnancy.
  - 18% had at least one binge (4 or more drinks in one sitting) in the three months before pregnancy, a significantly lower proportion than for 2012 births.
- 13% drank during the last 3 months of their pregnancy.
- 27% of women were not advised by a healthcare worker to abstain from alcohol during pregnancy, including 35% of women age 35 or more, the age group most likely to drink during pregnancy.
- 21% of women smoked marijuana in the year prior to pregnancy.
- 9% smoked marijuana during pregnancy.
  - 18% of women younger than 25 smoked marijuana during pregnancy.
  - 6% of women whose pregnancies were intended smoked marijuana during pregnancy, a significant increase from 2012 births and the highest proportion since Vermont PRAMS began collecting data on marijuana.

## Tobacco Use and Smoking Cessation

- 30% of women smoked in the 3 months prior to pregnancy.
- 17% smoked during the last trimester.
- 19% were smoking at the time of the survey.
- 79% of women who smoked cigarettes during the 3 months before pregnancy tried one or more smoking cessation strategies.
  - 68% tried to quit on their own.
  - 28% set a date by which to stop smoking.
  - Between 5% and 10% used booklets, videos or other materials; used a nicotine replacement product (like a patch, gum, or lozenge); or used a quit line or website.
  - Less than 5% attended a class or program, went to counseling, or used a pill\*.

## Stress & Abuse

- 73% of women experienced at least one major life stressor during the year before giving birth, with 31% experiencing at least 3 stressors, and 8% experiencing 6 or more.
  - 31% experienced an emotional stressor during the year before giving birth.
  - 55% had at least one major financial stressor.
    - 11% at some point did not have enough money to buy sufficient food.
  - 29% experienced partner-related stress.
    - 3% were physically abused by a husband or partner\*.
  - 20% had a potentially traumatic stressor, including 4% experiencing homelessness.
    - 10% of new mothers younger than 25 years old had been homeless at some point in the year before giving birth.

## Sleep Environment

- 86% of mothers exclusively placed their infant to sleep on his or her back.
- 22% of infants always or often shared a bed, and 17% sometimes shared a bed.
- 61% of infants rarely or never shared a bed.

## Postpartum Counseling

- 89% talked with a healthcare worker about birth control and 54% reported discussing how long to wait before getting pregnant again.
- 87% had a discussion with a healthcare worker about postpartum depression.
- 45% received information on support groups for new parents.
- 34% had a discussion with a healthcare worker about getting to and staying at a healthy weight after delivery.

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Questions or comments about this report, or requests for further data, may be sent to John Davy at [john.davy@vermont.gov](mailto:john.davy@vermont.gov) or (802) 863-7661. More information about Vermont PRAMS can also be found at <http://healthvermont.gov/research/PRAMS/prams.aspx>.

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\* Due to the small number of responses for these items, numbers should be interpreted with caution.